

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

NOVEMBER 7, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Planning Commission was called to order by the Chairman, James Deerin, on Monday, December 7, 2022, at 5:00 p.m., in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were Patricia Ingram, Julie Wells, Suzanne Litty, Jennifer Stanley, and Terry Sullivan. Also in attendance was Town Planner, Maria Brophy.

The minutes of the meeting of October 3, 2022, were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. #22-94, Christopher Rissmiller, 214 S. Morris Steet, replacement of existing heat pump equipment, 1st floor heat pump, 2nd floor heat pump, ductless heat pump and replacement of existing boiler. Victor MacSorely, building contractor, was present to represent Mr. Rissmiller. He explained that Mr. Rissmiller's lot was very narrow and that as a result, it was difficult in finding a place to set the condensers for the a/c units for the first and second floor of the building. The plan calls for the placement of the units to be facing towards the south side of the street, up close to the side, near the rear of the house, and about 65' from Factory Street in the back. In looking over the sketch plan provided with the application, Chairman Deerin noticed a pipe running along the southside of the house and questioned what that was for. Mr. MacSorely responded that was a cover, in the form of a half gutter, that would conceal the refrigerant line so that one would not see the black foam insulation on the lines connecting to the condenser units. He added that the units will be in the back and screening can be put up, if so desired by the commission. Also noted was that the owner wanted to put in two gas tanks, which are not there now, on the other side, by the chimney, and that a little fence could be installed to conceal them. Chairman Deerin pointed out that a request for propane tanks was not on the application submitted and that the HDC guidelines talk in terms of propane tanks being underground, if possible. It was explained that because the back part of the house is visible from Factory Street, the owner would need to screen the two a/c units. Chairman Deerin asked Mr. MacSorely to specifically explain how the units would be screened. Mr. MacSorely responded that simple pickets would be used as the new back porch itself has a simple design. Chairman Deerin noted that if the propane tanks were to be buried underground, they would not require HDC review. It was also stated that the application could be altered with the condition that the applicant construct a white picket fence to shield the proposed a/c units. Mrs. Stanley made a motion that the application for 214 N. Morris Street, for the replacement of existing heat pump equipment, a 1st floor heat pump, a 2nd floor heat pump, ductless heat pump and replacement of existing boiler, as installed, be approved along with the addition of a white picket fence to shield the units. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor.
2. #22-88, Courtney Lambeth, 107 Norton Street, placement of tank on right side of home and connect to existing line. Planner Maria Brophy spoke stating that she did not think the applicant would be able to make the meeting but that she could present the application, if needed. The new unit would be placed on the north side the of house where there is an existing hedge and

heat pump. Planner Brophy mentioned that the unit would not be any larger from what was there and that if the unit does turn out to be bigger, she would bring the permit back to the HDC. Questions were raised about screening the tank. Planner Brophy mentioned that she had warned the applicant that she may have to screen the unit with shrubbery or a fence. Chairman Deerin made a motion that with respect to 107 Norton Street, for the placement of a propane tank, on the north side of the house, in the rear, that the commission approve it subject to the homeowner providing screening, by way of either shrubbery or white wooden picket fencing for the new propane tank, as well as for the existing heat pump. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingram and unanimously carried with all in favor.

3. Permit #22-86, Waters United Methodist Church, 205 Market Street, exterior work to replace existing ramp with new deck, steps, and ramp; stormwater management work of existing parking and paths to be replaced with pervious paver surfaces and plantings. Waters Church was represented by architect Philip Logan and two members from the church. Mr. Logan informed the members that the church was trying to improve their church and the church grounds through a grant that they have applied for. The proposal is a two phase process. The first is finding an engineering solution for the parking area, which has not yet been engineered. Planner Brophy noted that the HDC can, if they wish, approve the proposed materials for the parking area but that it will not be included on the building permit if the engineering plan is not ready by the time the town goes to issue a permit for the other work that is being proposed. Chairman Deerin asked if the engineering would affect the materials. Mr. Logan responded that it would not, and that the idea is to present a new concept to Oxford whereby the church creates a retention system in a low lying area that slows the stormwater by using the parking area as a way to slow down the water before it floods Banks Street. This all relates to why the church is looking for special grant funding, by setting an example as to how small towns can generate certain retention systems. He explained that currently one cannot park in this area when Banks Streets flood. The application itself shows the use of pervious decking and pervious pavers along with a ramp. The other phase of the plan is to remove the existing walkways going up to the ramp and redo the main entrance with the idea of creating a gathering deck that is in alignment with the façade of the building that extends from one side to the other with either painted wood or composite wood planking with ¼" gaps, along with benches built in along the sides of the deck. Another item they are looking into is whether the existing concrete stoop that is there now can either be built up without demolishing the existing concrete or if it will need to be removed. Currently the plan is to rebuild the concrete stoop along with repurposing the handrails and making them bigger. In front of the church there would be a path that would take one all the way down to the parking area. The church sign would be moved towards the sidewalk and a new sidewalk would run up along the side of the ramp and also go out towards the street. There would be two entrances from the sidewalk that would connect with the western end of the deck and the other centered on the main entrance door to the church. Chairman Deerin asked if the plans were sufficient enough to get a building permit going or if these were just concepts. Planner Brophy responded that the proposed ramps have been reviewed and signed off on by the building inspector but that none of the engineering work had begun yet. Chairman Deerin suggested that the commission handle the proposed construction of the deck, new stoop, ramp, and concrete sidewalks first and then talk about the parking lot, if needed, and then handle anything else as a consultation. He addressed Mr. Logan asking if the proposed decking would be either painted wood or composite material.

Mr. Logan responded that the least expensive choice would be pressure treated wood, but they are looking at using composite material, if affordable. Mrs. Wells spoke stating that her choice would be to see what funding the church receives and then have them (Mr. Logan and the church representatives) come back to the commission to let them know what they are going to use instead of saying it can be either this or that. Chairman Deerin responded by stating that the commission should keep in mind that they would be approving the concept of the deck and new ramp and that the only open issue would be if the materials were to be wood or composite. This would also apply to if they were planning on going with a new sign, and if that sign would be the same in appearance or different. One of the church members present spoke stating that the church was hoping to replace their church sign with something similar to what they have. It was noted that a permit for the replacement of the church sign had been presented to the HDC some time ago but it was never carried through. Mrs. Wells stated that the first plan for the sign was more modern looking and that the commission wanted something similar to what is there now. Overall, she thought the plans as presented at this night's meeting were nice. Mrs. Ingram agreed that she liked the design as well. Chairman Deerin made a motion that with respect to the application of Waters United Methodist Church, submitted with the application dated September 16, 2022, as shown on sheet A-02, that the commission approve the demolition of the existing ramp and construction of a new deck, a new ramp, and new sidewalks, as well as the reconfiguration of the existing stoop to become comprised of the same material as proposed for the new deck and ramp. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor. The commission next went over the parking lot proposal. Mr. Logan presented samples of pervious pavers that would allow for a certain amount of credit towards impervious surface coverage. The pavers presented were made of concrete, having spaces in them to allow for water filtration, and could be stained different colors. The path leading to the parking lot would be similar to what is being used but with a brick colorant and the parking area would be banded by pavers with a certain color. As this was bring viewed as just a consultation, no final choices were provided. Chairman Deerin asked how many parking spaces there are now. Mr. Logan responded that the church has 22 but would be reducing it to 18. Mrs. Wells asked if they were planning on replacing the existing sidewalk. Mr. Logan responded that was correct and that a "pervious paver" system would be used along with certain areas reverting back to grass or lawn. Chairman Deerin noted that it sounded like a good plan, especially if they would be able to get some of the stormwater in that area taken care of. Mr Logan also mentioned, in passing, that the grant money they are looking at is to restore the exterior of the church and that there are some windows that they are looking into replacing. Mrs. Wells responded that the commission would need to see more details in order to comment on what Mr. Logan was mentioning and that he should include the church steeple, if they were looking into making any changes to that as well.

This concluded the review of building permits.

CONSULTATION

Bartley Eckhardt, property owner, along with Bonnie Johnson, of 102 E. Strand, met with the commission to go over a preliminary review of his plans to renovate the existing garage in the rear of the property. The plan is to tie in the cedar lap siding and fish scale, as it is on the main house now, and make it look like a vintage boat shed. The garage door opening, which is currently a low sitting garage door, would be raised and replaced with a custom 3 panel folding panel barn door, the material of which would be either

wood or composite material. The existing door and window on the east elevation would be replaced with ribbon windows. Chairman Deerin asked if the garage was intended to be used as a garage or studio. Mr. Eckhardt responded that his plan was to use it as a workshop. New doors to building would hinge and the width would remain the same. Mrs. Stanley suggested that Mr. Eckhardt consider installing some more windows if he wanted to have more light with the building. Mr. Eckhardt responded that the south and west elevations are very dark already and that little light would be gained on either of those sides. All agreed that the plans shown were attractive and would make for a good design. Chairman Deerin added when an application for the work is submitted, Mr. Eckhardt will need to provide to the HDC samples of the fishscale and siding materials.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby

Assistant Clerk